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SOUTH CAROLINA'S OLD TIME SCRIBES

RECORDS OF THE PAST REVEAL INTERESTING FACTS.

The Commons House of Assembly—Valuable Books Brought to Light by Mr. D. D. Wallace of Newberry.

In searching for material on the constitutional history of South Carolina, I discovered two very interesting and still more valuable volumes. These are the original manuscripts of the records of the commons house of assembly of South Carolina from September 23, 1692, to August 27, 1702, and of the grand council from March 11, 1671, to October 10, 1674. These are doubtless the oldest writings in South Carolina, as parts of them antedate by four years any competitor, and if, as is very probable, the competing Indian treaty is a copy, by a still greater time. These volumes were found, after much climbing and digging and tugging, among a great deal of old papers and "boastly" quantity of the blackest dust. They were resting high, right under the ceiling, above a tier of shelves, where they were thrown some years ago.

Nearly all the contents of these two old tomes were copied in to fine manuscript volumes in 1851, when all such records were; but there are a few pages of the council journal which seem to have been omitted, so that the newly found volume contains the only copy in existence, unless the London public record office or some private papers contain a duplicate sent contemporaneously to England. If so, however, Mr. Saintsbury and the commissioners of public records in the epoch making work failed to discover them—a supposition hardly probable. So that we have here absolutely the oldest document written in South Carolina, and an unduplicated copy. There are many great gaps in both these volumes, as is the case in our early records for the first few decades. They should, therefore, be prized the more. Perhaps it may not fail to be interesting to give some description of these ancient papers, except the ruins of Ribault's fort the oldest work of man made in the State, executed in the dim times when Charleston was a mere hamlet of 200 people, and could claim, without the least fear of successful contradiction, to embrace all the culture and education in South Carolina.

The journal of the commons house, or "general assembly," as it is entitled, is much the larger of the two volumes, and is composed of a number of smaller record blank books, or minutes, bound into one. At many places it presents a peculiar appearance, as the right hand page reads down and the left hand is inverted. This is because the scribe wrote straight through the book on only one side of the pages, and then turned up side down and wrote from the back to the beginning on the other side of the pages. A great variety of handwritings and quite a numerous assortment of black inks are in evidence. Handwriting reformers who read this may say at their next teachers' association meeting that, while some really beautiful hands, fancy beyond precedent, are hard to read, yet where a real specimen of the vertical system occurs, as it sometimes does, in its greatest perfection, it can be read like yesterday's newspaper.

The skill of the scribes is admirable. One, in particular, adorned his pages until they really resemble a rose bush on a frame. They had a way of imitating signatures when copying documents into their books, which they carried to such perfection that we may here see practically facsimiles of the autographs of Lords Clarendon and Berkeley and the Earl of Shaftesbury, and at a later date of Queen Caroline, or anybody whose name was signed to anything the scribe might copy.

Many of the oldest dates are written in strange Roman notation, impossible to understand, except by careful comparative study. The following, however, is very plain, but

interesting: "Die Sabati xxiii any th Jay." In many places all except the ferric components of the ink have vanished and left a streak of iron rust, while in the places where the fancy penman brandished his quill around in great flourishes, the writing ink has eaten the paper out and left a long burnt streak.

These old records show that early Carolinians enjoyed pretty much the same forms of self-government that we do, except for vexations and arbitrary vetoes from the proprietors on their salutary laws, which it is hard now to think of freemen enduring.

Writs of election issued in the name, e. g., of "John, Earle of Bath, Palatine," etc., and "Robt. Gibbs, Esqr., High Sheriff," and we find as one result Ralph Izard received "127 votes"—out of the whole State of South Carolina only 127 votes! Ah, friend, say not, Poor Ralph Izard! for he led the vote at this 1698 election, together with others, with his honorable unanimous "127 votes."

These were a kind of itinerant assemblies, meeting around at various members' houses, which, perhaps, accounts in part for so many varieties of good and bad ink, and the fading out of a few pages.

Perhaps comparatively few people know to what an extent the State of South Carolina has neglected properly to preserve its early records. While other States have published theirs in handsome volumes, proclaiming to the world all their great history, we have actually neglected to put into print a single or page of the records of the foundation and development of one of the noblest, most engaging, and, withal, important colonies and States in America. For my own part I must confess that I had no conception of the true character of the colony of South Carolina, nor of its early Statehood, until I went to the original manuscript sources. There has been much grandiloquent, and eloquent, talk about South Carolina's glorious history; but no just or adequate view has ever been given of her rightful place in American history. We refuse to publish our records; our citizens will not, and outsiders cannot write our history; so that neither our own citizens nor the country at large know of the noble history we should cherish as our dearest birthright. Gen. McCrady has done well by the colony's first 50 years; valuable manuscripts have been gotten from England, and army rolls compiled. But there is a great Klondike of treasure in the records of the commons house and council from 1671 to beyond the Revolution that waits to be made available for the historians of the whole country.

The records of the commons house of assembly and the council before the Revolution, and of the legislature of the State to about 1830 have never been printed. These records, of which there is but one copy in existence, are in manuscript, the writing of which is, in many instances, fading into illegibility. Perhaps it is not realized that when in many instances far advanced process of fading is complete, the history of our State will be lost forever. Perhaps our legislature and people do not know that for many years several of these irreplaceable, unbuyable volumes have been lost, and that any thief, any carelessness, any accident might any day bring the same fate to other volumes. The State of Tennessee, with tenfold less occasion, has years since appropriated an annual sum of \$5,000 to pay a learned man's salary in part, and be used to publish historical documents. But in early history Tennessee is a neophyte beside South Carolina. Here there were a great commonwealth, a highly developed society and a regular transplanted English government before the white man ever built his cabin on the Watauga.

South Carolina's spirit of freedom, her growth into a State, which, for 70 years, to wild the greatest power, perhaps, to its size, of any State in the Union, are locked up in those brown manuscript volumes in the State house. No one but the historical specialist, and of those,

only a few, can know that glorious story until the State publishes the manuscripts. If the process of leaves falling out, volumes getting lost, ink fading goes on many more years, it will be too late. Let the legislature appropriate even so small a sum as \$2,000 a year, or even \$1,000, to be donated to publishing these 100 pre-revolutionary volumes and about 100 post-revolutionary.

That it is not done is a shame to a State that need not hide its history; it is injustice to ourselves, to posterity, and to the men who won South Carolina from the wilderness, the savage and the Spaniard, and gave her a character distinct and unparalleled in the country's history.

D. D. WALLACE.

UNBALANCED BY GRIEF.

Young Lady, a Second Cousin of Admiral Schley, Succides.

Baltimore, Jan. 15.—Miss Anna Mary Hoeke Schley, 25 years of age, daughter of the late Col. William Louis Schley, poet, lawyer and veteran of two wars, and second cousin of Rear Admiral Schley, committed suicide today in her home, No. 717 West Saratoga street. Since the death of her father, to whom she was much attached, just a month ago today, Miss Schley has been inconsolable. A week since her mental condition became alarming to her friends, and attendants were constantly at her bedside.

This afternoon, her sister, who had been chatting with her, went below stairs for a few minutes, and when she returned found Miss Schley lying on her bed with a bullet hole in her left breast. She had shot herself through the heart with one of her father's revolvers. The two letters which she had written to friends indicated that she labored under the hallucination that she and her family were being pursued by some phantom.

WALT WHITMAN NEVER TIRES.

He Recalls Some of his Brilliant Detective Work in the Editor's Office, and Announces That he Will Run, as Usual, for Governor.

To the Editor of the News and Courier:—When it was first announced that Ellerbe had sold out, sub rosa, to the Local optionists, N. G. Gonzales, president, I wrote to The News and Courier advising the State executive committee to investigate the matter, and, if reports were true, to pronounce Ellerbe's nomination nulla bona and of none effect on the ground of fraud. The News and Courier did not publish. Will you please take it from the waste basket and let it see the light of day?

The announcement that I would retire from politics, after twenty months, has been misunderstanding. I have reconsidered and announce my candidacy for Governor at the next primary, and if I get all the votes of those who give me credit for always being right I will get where I can do the people good.

G. Walt Whitman.

Jonesville, January 16.

SEABOARD DEAL UPHELD.

Mr. Ryan's Attempt to End in the Sale of Stock Defeated.

[Telegram to The Daily News.] Baltimore, Md., Jan. 16.—Judges Wykes and Stockbridge today denied the injunction recently asked for in the Maryland circuit court by Thomas F. Ryan, of New York, in which the petitioners sought to restrain the transfer of 8,000 shares of the stock of the Seaboard Air Line held by trustees under a pooling agreement.

The petition was dismissed and Mr. Ryan was ordered to pay the costs. The stock in question were recently sold to a syndicate headed by John Skelton Williams, of Richmond, and its transfer involves control of the Seaboard system.

It is understood that the purchasers have agreed to pay \$200 per share for the stock which Mr. Ryan claims had been previously sold to him for \$125 per share. The action of the court in denying the injunction clears the way to a transfer of the road to its new owners.

STIRRING DAYS OF 1876.

HOW A. B. WILLIAMS ONCE LAID IN WAIT FOR TOM MILLER.

Very Interesting Reminiscences of a Brilliant Reporter who Followed and Worked for Hampton—Extraordinary Changes Which Twenty-two Years Have Wrought in Famous Black Republicanism and Leading Red Shirt Democracy—Presented in Miller's Excellent Speech.

(Greenville News, January 3.)

Thomas E. Miller, professor and president of the State College for colored students at Orangeburg, made a speech at the Emancipation Day celebrated at Spartanburg yesterday, and it was a good speech. It is the utterance of a very clear and cool headed and loyal colored man.

Reading the speech over, we are moved to marvel over the changes the years bring. Here is Tom Miller advising his people to a policy of conciliation and submission. He was a member of the Republican Legislature of 1875.

Lord bless us, that was twenty-two years ago, and men who were not born then are voters now, and women who were not thought of as mothers of growing families, and the universities and colleges are full of boys and girls who did not arrive in this world until years after that.

Tom Miller was in those days a light woolen suit, with a sack coat, in the pockets of which he carried his hands most of the time. Very likely he had a revolver in each of them. The editor of the Greenville News sat for two days and a night with a pistol trained on Tom Miller and learned to know him well. It was probably the most enormous pistol ever made—the barrel of a Remington rifle sawed off and its lock fitted to a pistol butt. It carried but one ball, and the editor of the Greenville News, then reporter for a Charleston newspaper, which died long ago, adjusted it in the drawer of his desk, at the head of the main aisle, and by mathematical diagram and calculation and an improvised range finder fastened it with pins and cocked it, so that on opening the drawer to a certain pencil mark and turning it loose it would inevitably "fetch" the Hon. Thomas E. Miller, then a member from Beaufort, who all unconscious of what was waiting for him, was up and down every minute or so, apparently doing his best to bring on a row.

During those nerve-trying thirty-six hours the editor of the Greenville News studied and contemplated the member from Beaufort, and speculated as to how he would look and feel as the Remington-bullet took him in the space beneath his wish bone, and surmised that he would smile a kind of sickly smile and curl up on the floor, and that the subsequent proceedings would interest him no more; which the same editor of the Greenville News, after a very few of the long seconds which drag their slow length along while fighting is in progress, and a gent is in momentary expectation of being plugged; for he saw immediately beneath Ed Mackey and Judge Wallace, the rival speakers, and knew well that the shots of the enthusiasts on both sides would be concentrated in that direction and that somebody would shoot him.

But it all passed off and nobody was hurt; and now the rantankerous cavorting, red hot and no compromise member from Beaufort rides about in a frock coat with high silk hat in carriages and speaks of conciliation and submission. The Ring-tailed Roarer, from the Santee, who threatened a row every minute, is dead, we believe; Oliver P. Morton, the great wielder of the bloody shirt in the United States, whom we all used to hate so bitterly, is dead and almost forgotten; the black incendiary from Orangeburg, whose name we forgot has passed out of sight; Ed Mackey is dead, Dan Chamberlain is our very good friend, the Hon. John Sam Verner, who was a wild man from the mountains and used to jump on his desk and wave his arms about, is a peaceful and de-

corous citizen; the Hon. J. Lawrence Orr, who led the storming party and defied the sergeant-at-arms, the State constabulary and the United States, and smashed in a green blazer door and incidentally an Irish guard with two hundred pounds of weight reinforced by a six shooter, is now so law abiding that he even returns his income tax. The Hon. John C. Sheppard, who regularly kicked his way in and out of the hall of the House of Representatives with the aid of two large revolvers, is now a man of peace, who deprecates violence. A Republican President has come down among us and set us all to hurrahing with kindly words of the Southern people and the Confederate soldiers, and we, who have in our time sworn great oaths of vengeance and perpetual hate, respond sively when the stars and stripes are hoisted.

All of us have cooler blood than we had twenty-two years ago, and hope, squander men to listen to us, perhaps we did not listen as carefully and respectfully as we should have done in those days which seem such a little while ago, but twenty-two years have passed, and that is a long time.

Prof. Miller has learned and all of us have learned. He is giving his people good advice for the present—the only advice that can be given by a settled man to any race that is in any where in contact any competition with the white race. As he says, the Pharaoh on the throne knows not Joseph. Let him carry out the simple. The Jews borrowed from the Egyptians' earnings and jewels and gold. We do not know whether these are symbols of argument to be taken literally. They may be not only, history but prophecy. The negro is borrowing from the white man better and more valuable things than gold—education; civilization, ambition, the spirit of thrift, the power of push, the strength of purpose. Let him take all these and gird up his loins, and with staff in his hand and bread leavened or unleavened, go forth to some promised land, where he may be his own man and regulate his own affairs and work out his own salvation.

Submission is a present necessity, as it was with the children of Israel in Egypt, and has been with the same great race in so many countries, through so many weary centuries since, but it cannot remain as a permanent policy for people who intend to rise.

STATEMENTS FROM COL. NEAL.

He Will Make One as Soon as His Condition Warrants It.

[The State, 17.] It is stated that as soon as Col. Neal is able to transact any business the \$10,000 promised by the penitentiary board of directors will be paid into the State treasury. Drs. Taylor and Pope think that within the next three or four days he will be able to receive visitors. He has informed a reporter that as soon as he is able, he will make a statement for the public in regard to some things that have transpired since he has been confined to his bed.

EVICTING MILL HANDS.

Ugly Work Begun at Augusta Mills Had Bitten Because of Bad Weather.

Augusta, Ga., Jan. 16.—The first evicting from the mill houses of striking operatives was made today. This is the seventh week of the striking and the operatives and operators are as far apart as ever. The operatives ask operators of other cities not to come to Augusta at this time. The evictions were halted after one family had been put out because a cold, drizzling rain began falling.

NO MORE TROOPS TO CUBA.

Party Leaving Charleston Said to be the Last of the Winter.

Charleston, Jan. 17.—The steamer Saratoga sailed from here for Matanzas, Cuba, at noon today with a battalion of the 100th Indiana volunteers and a cargo of provisions and camp equipment.

I understood that the government will send no more troops to Cuba just now. So this is possibly the last expedition to sail from here this winter.

OUR SOLDIER BOYS IN CUBA.

MANY ENTRANCING VIEWS FROM CAMP COLUMBIA.

Lieut. Belknap Enthusiastic Over the Site of the Camp of the Second Regiment. Every Tent was in Place Last Tuesday—Daily "Maths" from "The States."

(News and Courier.)

Headquarters 2nd South Carolina Volunteers, Camp Columbia, Havana, Cuba, Thursday, January 12.—Special: The regiment is in its new camp to night. Early this morning the wagons began hauling the baggage and tents, and by 3 o'clock everything was on the ground that is now occupied by the pitched tents. Every tent is in place, and the only thing needed to make this a complete camp is clearing off the camp streets, which work will be done to-morrow. The ground here is covered with rocks ranging in size from that of a small bird egg to huge pieces weighing hundreds of pounds.

The views presented from our present location are simply grand. Away in and direction are seen mountains, at the foot of which occurred the skirmish in which Maceo was killed. We are surrounded by hills of marvellous beauty, while between these in four places the sea is seen distinctly. At sea, coming to or going from the island.

The rolling hills, covered with fresh, green vegetation, cottages and elegant dwellings seen on the hill sides in the distance, the little streams flowing their serpentine courses, the beautiful trees, the gardens peculiar to tropical climates, all go to make up the most beautiful scenes that ever the mortal beheld.

The camp is pitched away from all the other regiments upon a knoll from which beautiful views are presented in every direction. We are off from the road about a quarter of a mile, just in the rear of a quaint, old residence built in the here predominant old Grecian style of architecture.

Along one side of the camp is a field in which corn is tusseling; on another side is built a fort which, is strange to say, is down in a valley; a stone fence runs along the northern border of the camp, separating our land from that owned by another party. This fence runs along over hills, through dales and valleys, turning this way and that, as far as the eye can see.

On the other side of it, to the right, are fields of sugar cane nearing maturity, away to the left is a valley used as a pasture, covered with green grass and pretty shrubbery; the hills on one side being nearly perpendicular. Away to the west we see the sun set behind a mountain, and this afternoon everybody stopped work long enough to look at the scene, which was grandly indescribable.

An old order, requiring the commanding officer of every company to submit in writing daily a report of inspection of company's mess, was overlooked by many of our captains while the camp was in a very unsettled condition. This morning those captains received a notice like this from brigade headquarters:

Headquarters 2nd Brigade, 1st Division, 7th Army Corps, Camp Columbia, Havana Cuba, January 11, 1899.—Commanding Officer of Company—, 2nd South Carolina Regiment, Infantry, Volunteers—Sir: The brigadier general commanding directs that you submit explanation in writing for your failure to submit the required mess inspection report to the regimental officer of the day for January 10 and 11, 1899. Very respectfully your obedient servant, A. D. Wise, Captain and Assistant Adjutant General.

This is only a specimen of what any officer gets when he happens to fail to comply with every bit of instructions, however minute.

Lieut. Cox came to Havana yesterday on the hospital ship Missouri and joined the regiment today. We now have a daily mail system. The plant system of boats being the mail from Port Tampa three times a week, and three boats from Miami to Havana every week.

WANTS LATIMER'S SEAT.

Congressman Latimer and the Greenwood Trouble—His Contest with Tolbert.

(Special to News and Courier.)

Washington, January 8.—Representative Latimer has been notified that his seat in the next Congress will be contested by R. K. Tolbert. Unfortunately for Mr. Tolbert, he has not complied with the law in filing his notice of contest, and he may have to plead for a special Act of Congress to have his case considered. The law requires that a notice of contest must be filed with the contestee within thirty days after the official returns of the election are declared. The result of the last congressional election in South Carolina was announced November 26. Under the law Mr. Tolbert should have served notice on Mr. Latimer not later than December 26. As a matter of fact his notice was not delivered to Mr. Latimer until December 28, just two days too late to come within the provisions of the law on the subject.

On his way back to Washington, Mr. Latimer stopped at Greenwood to make a personal investigation of the situation there, growing out of the recent trouble over the Tolbert family. He attended a citizens' meeting held at Greenwood, which was called to allow the leading people of that vicinity to announce to the world that they are opposed to lawlessness and other brutalities, which have recently been charged up against the citizens of that community. Mr. Latimer said he made a speech to the people, in which he heartily approved the sentiments expressed in the resolutions adopted, setting forth that it is the desire and intention of the people of Greenwood to see the rights of all citizens enforced and law and order maintained, without regard to the color of the offenders.

Mr. Latimer said he found a very general feeling against the Tolberts at Greenwood, but there is a disposition to permit them to return home provided they are willing to accept the final verdict in that section to the effect that white people must rule. Some of the members of the Tolbert family have accepted the situation and are back in their former homes, well received and respected by their neighbors. Mr. Latimer says he believes he other Tolberts will be allowed to return if they are disposed to make a declaration to the effect that they are prepared to submit to white man's rule in that section.

Mr. Latimer says there is another cause for discontent and embarrassment, not attributable to the Tolberts. There are certain men who seem to have formed a combination to drive all the colored labor from that section of the country. Owing to the driving out of the colored labor, the owners of the farms are unable to raise their crops, hence their lands become almost valueless and the anti-colored labor combine seeks to get possession of the discarded lands at a figure far below their real value. Some well-known citizens in that vicinity are said to be interested in the combine and the situation is full of danger to the interests of the more law abiding citizens, who are in a measure dependent upon colored labor to work their farms.

Mr. Latimer says he is as much opposed to negro domination as any man in South Carolina, but he realizes that the law-abiding citizens are placed at a decided disadvantage in the estimation of the national authorities at Washington by the indiscreet actions of certain men in the State, who are endeavoring to drive the colored labor out of the State. Exaggerated reports of these transactions are brought to Washington and poured into the ears of members of the Republican Administration, all of which are used to the disadvantage of the Representatives in Congress from South Carolina, and also to the detriment of the citizens of the State, who are interested in the growth and progress of the country.

It is understood that the President has received a number of communications from the vicinity of Greenwood on this subject, and he has expressed a desire to have the subject fully investigated. Mr. Latimer stopped at Greenwood purposely to inform himself as to the true conditions there, for it is his intention to have an interview with the President on this subject. Mr. Latimer says he realizes that the subject is one that should be handled with great delicacy, but he is confident that if the people of the Greenwood district will carry out the spirit set forth in the resolutions they adopted at the recent mass meeting the Administration can be made to take a clearer and a more satisfactory view of the situation.

What to read.

If you are down with the blues, read the 27th Psalm.

If you feel lonesome and unprotected, read the 91st Psalm.

If you are out of sorts, read the 12th chapter of Hebrews.

If you don't know where to look or the month's rent, read the 37th Psalm.